

REMARKS

In response to the above-identified Office Action, only Claims 1 and 2 have been retained, and they have been amended in a manner which is believed to stress their patentable distinctiveness over the cited Katakura patent. Also, new Claims 6 and 7 have been added in the form of system claims which are believed to be patentable for the same reasons, respectively, as amended method Claims 1 and 2.

In particular, Claim 1 has been amended to require that when a black-and-white image signal is transferred from the image generation controller unit to the image processing controller unit, the image signals of the black color component are simultaneously transferred by using the yellow, magenta, cyan and black signal lines, wherein the black-and-white image signal is a binary signal and has a higher resolution than the color image signal. Claim 2 has been amended in the similar manner and is now presented in independent form. The main difference between Claims 1 and 2 is in that the number of image bearing bodies of the image formation unit is one in Claim 1 and four in Claim 2.

A very important feature of the present invention is that when a black-and-white image signal is transferred from the image generation controller unit to the image processing controller unit, the image signals of the black color component are simultaneously transferred by using the yellow, magenta, cyan and black signal lines. According to this feature, the transmission time for the black-and-white image signal can be shortened.

Referring now to the cited Katakura patent, that references discloses a

printing method which increases the printing speed for black monochrome printing by effectively using compressing circuits, expanding circuits and buffers provided for the processing of other colors. The Katakura patent, however, does not address the shortening of the transmission time for the black-and-white image signal. Accordingly, Katakura also fails to disclose that when a black-and-white image signal is transferred from the image generation controller unit to the image processing controller unit, the image signals of black color component are simultaneously transferred by using the yellow, magenta, cyan and black signal lines. For these reasons, it is not possible to shorten the transmission time for the black-and-white image signal.

Another very important feature of the invention is that the black-and-white image signal is a binary signal and has a higher resolution than the color image signal. As discussed in the Specification, the black-and-white binary image signal has a small amount of data and therefore the transmission time becomes small (page 16, line 27 to page 17, line 5; page 17, line 25 to page 18, line 2; page 26, line 16 to page 27, line 4). Furthermore, since the black-and-white image signal has a higher resolution than the color image signal, it is possible to transmit images with smooth edges, for example.

Also, the Katakura reference fails to disclose that the black-and-white image signal is a binary signal and has a higher resolution than the color image signal. Katakura states that resolution is decreased in printing images including only characters in the monochrome printing (column 22, lines 28-42). Katakura, however, does not teach that the black-and-white image signal has a higher resolution than the color image signal. Accordingly, it is not possible to transmit images with smooth edges.

Again, new system Claims 6 and 7 are patterned respectively after method Claims 1 and 2 and are patentable for the same reasons. Applicants respectfully submit that the four claims now presented in the Application are allowable, wherefore the issuance of a Notice of Allowance is solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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